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FCC

COMMENT RE: Proceeding 17-108

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I wish to register my **OPPOSITION** to proceeding 17-108. I am in favor of maintaining equality of access and representation on the internet, known as 'Net Neutrality.'

Today we realize limited access to a variety of television content as control of what's made available to us lies with the companies that provide television cable services, often as a monopoly in a given geographical region. Much programming is only available to individuals who can afford to access it via a premium purchase—one's options diminish significantly otherwise. At the time, the argument was that the essential news options were made available (local station's offerings and Public Television partners), and the rest was 'entertainment,' and therefore optional for people. One could say that argument still stands.

However, in the case of the internet, one may not know from whom information of use to the public may be found—perhaps it is in the content of a website published by a company that is not big enough to afford to buy an upgrade in access. Perhaps the Internet Service Provider further indicates that because that website owner cannot pay premium speed pricing, it will not be included in the 'basic' subscription offered to the public. In this way, the public is effectively prevented from accessing that content, and those who have paid for a 'premium' internet access would find it hard to locate the underfunded website, as it will likely fall below thresholds of availability even in search options—as search ranking placement would need to be 'purchased.'

One can argue that all manner of manufacturing companies purchase advantages not equally available to all for monetary reasons: Retailers accept 'slotting fees' for advantageous merchandising, funds for advertising, and agreements on quantities and limits to assortment. This, it is believed, encourages companies to compete more vigorously, and only the strong (best funded and retaining or improving sales) will survive. This is fine, so long as then 'next great idea' has a place to make a foray into the potential customers' awareness. Without funds to get something on a shelf at a brick and mortar location, the one available option that remains is via online sales. This is our incredible small business incubator, and to hobble those innovators there as well would be to condemn them to a near impossible market-entry position.

Punishing small business and restricting public access to all information are the two most egregious crimes in the proceeding as designed, in my opinion.

Do not move to allow internet service providers to put gates and barriers in place that only money can open.

Thank you,

Michelle T. des Islets